

REMARKS

Applicants have amended claims 1, 10, 12, 13, 17 and 19, and have cancelled claims 2-19, during prosecution of this patent application. Applicants are not conceding in this patent application that the subject matter encompassed by said amended and cancelled claims are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, since the claim amendments and cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of this patent application. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue the subject matter encompassed by said amended and cancelled claims, and to pursue other claims, in one or more continuations and/or divisional patent applications.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 10-12 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 10-13, 17 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over US 6,507,826 Maners in view of *University of New Hampshire Financial and Administrative Procedures*, (http://www.finadmin.unh.edu/pol_proc/chapter_23/pro23_051.html; issued by Computing and Information Services; Issued Date: 01/01/94; retrieved date 9/11/06) hereinafter, Procedures in further view of Furphy et al. (hereinafter Furphy, US Patent No. 6,882,983).

Applicants respectfully provide support for new claim language and traverse the § 112 and § 103 rejections with the following arguments.

Support For New Claim Language

New claim language in independent claims 1 and 27 is supported as follows:

“receiving, by a front end server from a requestor, a purchase request for goods”

(specification, page 8, lines 9-15; page 9, lines 1-2);

“said goods having a designation denoting that the goods are receivable which requires a positive confirmation from the requestor to provide authorization to pay for the goods”

(specification, page 8, lines 17-18; page 13, lines 6-9);

“said designation being stored in the front end server” (specification, page 8, line 19);

“an invoice processing system comprising the front end server, an application server and a back end server, said back end server coupled to the front end server via the application server, said front end server comprising a positive confirmation application and a database, said application server comprising a positive confirmation bridge;” (FIG. 2 and specification, page 8, lines 9-12);

“sending, by the front end server to the back end server, a requisition comprising requirements relating to the received purchase request and including the designation” (FIG. 1 and specification, page 9, lines 1-3);

“generating, by the back end server in response to receiving the requisition sent by the front end server, said purchase order based on the requisition” (FIG. 1 and specification, page 9, line 4);

“said back end server transmitting or delivering the purchase order to a vendor that can provide the requested goods”(FIG. 1 and specification, page 9, lines 4-6);

“after said transmitting or delivering the purchase order to the vendor, said application

server receiving an invoice from the vendor, said invoice referencing the purchase order and requesting payment for the goods” (FIG. 1 and specification, page 9, lines 9-11);

“after said application server receiving the invoice from the vendor, said positive confirmation bridge marking the invoice to indicate that said positive confirmation is required” (FIG. 2 and specification, page 11, lines 7-9);

“after said positive confirmation bridge marking the invoice, said back end server receiving the invoice from the application server” (FIG. 2 and specification, page 9, lines 9-11);

“responsive to said back end server receiving the invoice from the positive confirmation bridge, said back end server communicating transaction information pertaining to the invoice to the front end server” (FIGS. 1-2 and specification, page 9, lines 12-16);

“after said communicating transaction information, said positive confirmation application providing notice to the requestor that the invoice has been received and that the invoice includes the required positive confirmation” (FIG. 2 and specification, page 11, lines 10-13; page 12, lines 7-9);

“after said providing notice to the requestor, said front end server receiving a response from the requestor for authorizing or rejecting payment for the goods” (FIG. 2 and specification, page 11, line 17 - page 12, line 3).

New claim language in independent claim 27 and dependent claim 20 (“said front end server recording the response in the database”) is supported in the specification, page 12, lines 4-6.

New claim language in dependent claims 21-22 and 28-29 (“wherein the received response is for authorizing payment for the goods” and “wherein the application server further comprises a requisition bridge, ... said application server notifying the back end server via the requisition bridge that payment for the goods has been authorized”) is supported in the FIG. 2 and specification, page 9, lines 19-22; page 11, line 10 - page 12, line 3.

New claim language in dependent claims 23 and 30 (“wherein the received response is for rejecting payment for the goods”) is supported in the specification, page 9, lines 22 - page 10, line 4.

New claim language in dependent claims 24 and 31 (“wherein the notice directs the requestor to a location where the positive confirmation can be performed”) is supported in the specification, page 11, lines 11-13.

New claim language in dependent claims 25 and 32 (“wherein the application server further comprises a confirmation interface to the database, wherein the confirmation interface is configured to be executed by the positive confirmation application,... providing the confirmation interface to the requester to enable the requester to both enter an identifier of the invoice and obtain access to data comprised by the invoice”) is supported in the specification, FIG. 2 and page 11, lines 17-20.

New claim language in dependent claims 26 and 33 (“wherein said receiving the response is performed via the confirmation interface”) is supported in FIG. 2 and the specification, page 11, line 17 - page 12, line 3.

35 U.S.C. § 112: Claims 1, 10-12 and 17

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 10-12 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

Since claims 10-12 and 17 have been canceled, the rejection of claims 10-12 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph is moot.

The Examiner states: “The Examiner could not find support in the specification for "receivable commodities including selected commodities that do not flow through a receiving dock where a dock worker creates a receipt transaction into an application..." as recited by the applicant in claim 1 lines 12-17.”

In response, Applicants note that amended claim 1 herein does not include the language “receivable commodities including selected commodities that do not flow through a receiving dock where a dock worker creates a receipt transaction into an application...”.

The Examiner further states that “the Examiner could not find support in the specification for the newly added claim limitation: "an item marked on said purchase order at the time of requisition as requiring positive confirmation.””.

In response, Applicants note that amended claim 1 herein does not include the language “an item marked on said purchase order at the time of requisition as requiring positive confirmation”.

Based on the preceding arguments, Applicants respectfully contend that claim 1 is not unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

35 U.S.C. § 103: Claims 1, 10-13, 17 and 19 and New Claims 20-27

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 10-13, 17 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over US 6,507,826 Maners in view of *University of New Hampshire Financial and Administrative Procedures*, (http://www.finadmin.unh.edu/pol_proc/chapter_23/pro23_051.html; issued by Computing and Information Services; Issued Date: 01/01/94; retrieved date 9/11/06) hereinafter, Procedures in further view of Furphy et al. (hereinafter Furphy, US Patent No. 6,882,983).

Since claims 10-13, 17 and 19 have been canceled, the rejection of claims 10-13, 17 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is moot.

Applicants respectfully contend that claim 1 is not unpatentable over Maners in view of Procedures in further view of Furphy, because Maners in view of Procedures in further view of Furphy does not teach or suggest each and every feature of claim 1. For example, Maners in view of Procedures in further view of Furphy does not teach or suggest the feature:

“generating, by the back end server in response to receiving the requisition sent by the front end server, said purchase order based on the requisition;

said back end server transmitting or delivering *the purchase order* to a vendor that can provide the requested goods;

after said transmitting or delivering the purchase order to the vendor, said application server receiving an invoice from the vendor, *said invoice referencing the purchase order* and requesting payment for the goods;

after said application server receiving the invoice from the vendor, said positive confirmation bridge marking the invoice to indicate that said positive confirmation is required;

after said positive confirmation bridge marking the invoice, said back end server receiving the invoice from the application server;

responsive to said back end server receiving the invoice from the positive confirmation bridge, said back end server communicating transaction information pertaining to the invoice to the front end server;

after said communicating transaction information, said positive confirmation application providing notice to the requestor that the invoice has been received and that the invoice includes the required positive confirmation;

after said providing notice to the requestor, said front end server receiving a response from the requestor for authorizing or rejecting payment for the goods” (emphasis added).

The preceding features of claim 1 comprise limitations relating to a purchase order and an invoice relating to the purchase order. However, the discussion in Maners, col. 5, lines 44 - 58 does not disclose the limitations relating to a purchase order and an invoice referencing the purchase order recited in the preceding feature of claim 1.

The discussion in Maners, col. 5, line 59 - col. 10, line 17, pertains specifically to orphan invoices which do not relate to purchase orders as specifically stated in Maners, col. 5, line 59 - col. 6, line 1 (“***The present invention can also process invoices that do not have order reference information, such as the purchase order number. These types of invoices will be called orphan invoices hereinafter.*** The ability to handle orphan invoices is a significant advantage of the present invention that is not found in any known prior art EDI system. ***The ability of the MicroEDI server 202 to accept and automatically process orphan invoices allows vendors to invoice a company for items, such as products or services, that were provided to the***

company, without having to receive a purchase order.”).

The preceding quote from Maners, col. 5, line 59 - col. 6, line 1 makes it clear that Maners, col. 5, line 59 - col. 10, line 17, which the Examiner relies upon, does not disclose any of the limitations relating to a purchase order and an invoice referencing the purchase order in the preceding feature of claim 1.

Furthermore, the preceding quote from Maners, col. 5, line 59 - col. 6, line 1 teaches away from the description of Maners’ orphan invoice in Maners, col. 5, line 59 - col. 10, line 17, being applicable to a purchase order and an invoice referencing the purchase order.

Based on the preceding arguments, Applicants respectfully maintain that claim 1 is not unpatentable over Maners in view of Procedures in further view of Furphy, and that claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Since new claims 20-26 depend from claim 1, Applicants contend that new claims 20-26 are likewise in condition for allowance.

Furthermore, new claim 27 comprises the same feature discussed supra for claim 1. Therefore, new claim 27 is likewise not unpatentable over Maners in view of Procedures and is in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the preceding arguments, Applicants respectfully believe that all pending claims and the entire application meet the acceptance criteria for allowance and therefore request favorable action. If the Examiner believes that anything further would be helpful to place the application in better condition for allowance, Applicants invites the Examiner to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below. The Director is hereby authorized to charge and/or credit Deposit Account 09-0457 (IBM).

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